

# King David

PURSUIT OF THE HEART OF GOD

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## About This Book

People sometimes ask why I would take the time to write a book. The answer is twofold. First, it's an opportunity to speak with my children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren about this wonderful gospel that I have had the honor of working for all of my life. I want them to see the joy and power of living a life guided and protected by God's Word, God's Spirit, and God's commands. In doing so, I hope to establish many generations of my family in the wonderful grace of our Lord. So I write as a father.

I also write as a pastor. New Life Wesleyan Church has become a rather large body of believers meeting in multiple services and multiple locations across multiple states. While this is a huge reason to praise God and more of a blessing than any of us who work here could ever have hoped for, it creates its own set of challenges. It has become impossible for me to sit down individually with folks in the church like I once did and have deeper conversations about the power of God's Word and how it can be applied in their lives. And so, this is the reason for a series of books called *Coffee with the Pastor*.

While I am neither a theologian nor a scholar, as a pastor, it is my job to help people read and better understand the Word of God. His Word is powerful and life changing. If you read and understand it, you can see the God of heaven through the blood of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit—and that will change your life. Therefore, the goal of this series of books is not theological, but a practical application of life-changing, biblical truth. That is the purpose of my ministry and the ultimate goal of my life.

So, grab a cup of coffee, open up your Bible, and let us think about what God can do in your life.



## A Heart for Leading

*The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king. . . . Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The LORD has not chosen these." So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," Jesse answered. "He is tending the sheep." Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives." So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; this is the one." So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah."*

—1 Samuel 16:1, 10–13

That day began like any other day in David's life. He was sitting alone watching sheep. It was an unimportant job for



an unimportant person. He was truly a nobody. At least he and everyone around him thought he was, but God had other plans. By the end of the day, the prophet Samuel would anoint him king. Anointing a shepherd boy to be the next king? What was Samuel thinking? What was God after?

Keep in mind that David's résumé was not impressive. For the office of king, one would expect the finest schools, great accomplishments, a powerful family, and immense wealth. Kings are born to privilege, not manual labor. Yet God chose this shepherd to be king. God sees what we cannot. God looked into the very soul of this young man and found strength and character fit for a throne. What no one else recognized, God saw as potential. There was more to this young shepherd than met the eye.

Just like David, we may feel alone and forgotten. We may feel like an unimportant person with an unimportant job and an uninteresting life. Truth is, God sees us in a different light. While we tend to the mundane tasks of our daily existence, God shapes us. As David tended his father's sheep, God was shaping him spiritually, physically, and emotionally for the tremendous task that lay ahead of him. In one sense, David's job never changed. He would still watch over someone else's flock, but instead of watching his father's sheep, he would watch over God's chosen people.

While watching sheep, David learned the spiritual art of worship. Many of the Old Testament psalms are songs David wrote to worship God. David might have thought he was

just killing time. Bored and alone, he strummed around on his instrument and wrote songs from the emotions that welled up in his heart. He had plenty of time to think and pray. From those thoughts and prayers came the ability to comprehend and communicate the depths of his need for God. This prepared him for the day when he would express the deepest human emotions of praise, elation, sorrow, and despair for an entire nation. David's need for God was not unique to him, and when others heard the cries of his heart, they could relate to his emotion and his desire. From that lonely forgotten place, David found words and music that would inspire an entire nation, and, eventually, an entire world. In that pasture, David had the time to acquire the spiritual insight of a king.

Most of us have lonely times when we feel forgotten and left out. They may be moments when we are asked, or forced, to tend to seemingly unimportant tasks. I call these moments creative boredom, which is a place where God seems to set us aside, for unknown reasons, and forces us to just sit still for a while. As we sit with nothing of apparent value to do, we begin to contemplate, think, pray, and if we get bored enough, maybe even sing. We may believe we are accomplishing nothing, and yet what we create in those hours, days, weeks, months, or even years of isolation, often becomes the base for much of what we will accomplish in the years that follow. God is using those times to develop our thoughts, prayers, faith, and core beliefs. When the day of leadership arrives,

along with its pressures, that leadership rests firmly on the well-laid foundation of creative boredom. At that point, God has us right where he has always wanted us.

While David was watching those sheep, he also learned to fight like no one else. David went toe-to-toe with both a lion and a bear. He learned to handle himself in dangerous situations. He learned to pull victory out of what seemed to be impossible situations. He learned to get the upper hand against an opponent who was obviously superior. Having killed wild animals with his bare hands, tall warriors didn't seem so frightening anymore. Nothing seemed impossible for this young shepherd who had already faced death and prevailed. In those fields, David had the opportunity to acquire the powerful, physical ability of a king.

Something else was learned in those lonely days that would be easy to miss. Why did David fight the lion and the bear in the first place? Why was he willing to be there alone in that lousy job? David understood his place as the youngest, his job to protect the sheep, and his duty to his father. Out in the pasture, David came to grips with who he was, and he willingly accepted the assignment he had been given.

Unlike so many talented leaders we know today, David was willing to do the simple and mundane tasks given to him. He did not demand a better job, higher pay, or more respect. He simply accepted who he was and did his job. In that pasture, David learned one of the most profound lessons in all of leadership: great leaders are carved out of great followers.

You cannot achieve greatness as a leader unless you have first learned the art of following. In those lonely fields, David had the opportunity to gain the emotional stability of a king. God was using the mundane to work a miracle. God was preparing the simple to be spectacular. God was preparing the nobody for nobility. A new day was dawning in Israel. No one realized it at the time, and nothing seemed to change. Saul was King, Samuel was the prophet and priest, and David was watching sheep. Although everything seemed normal, there was a new king, and it was a new day.